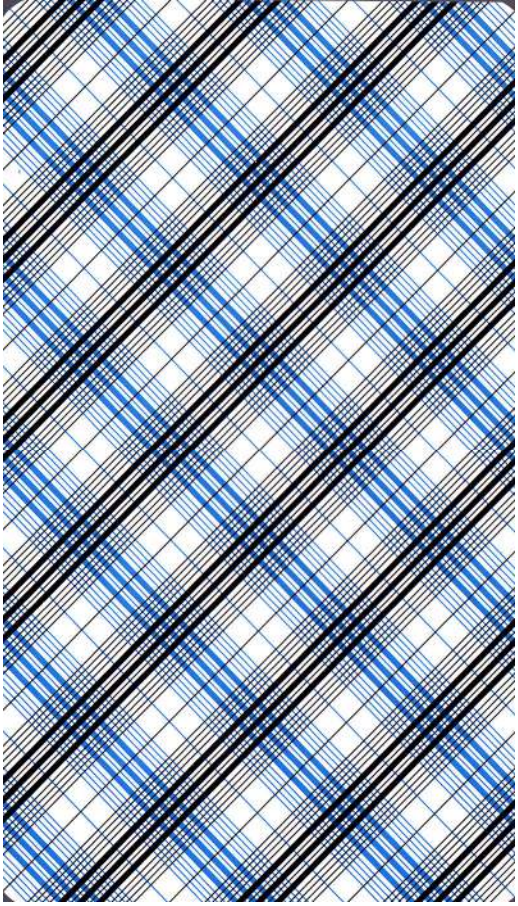

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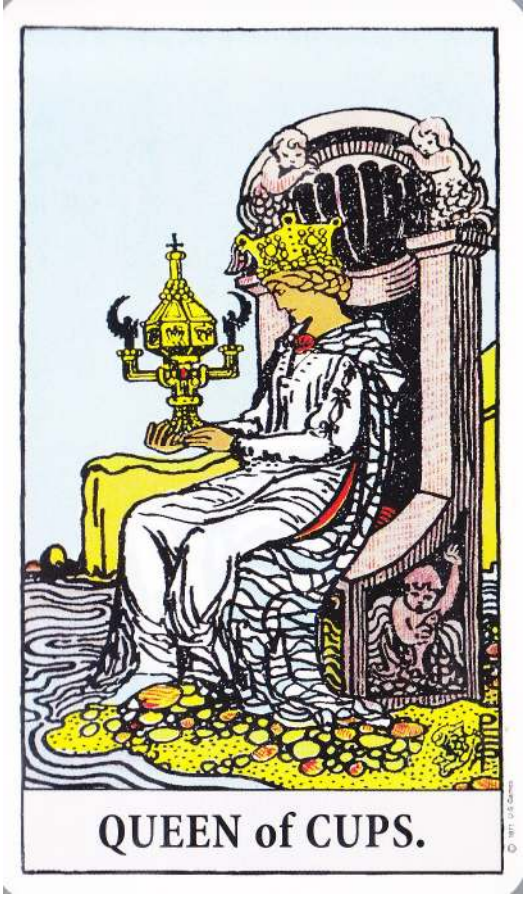

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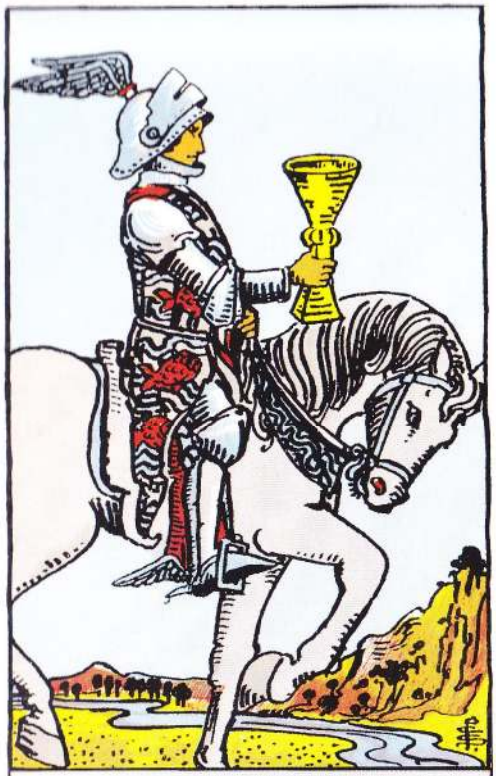

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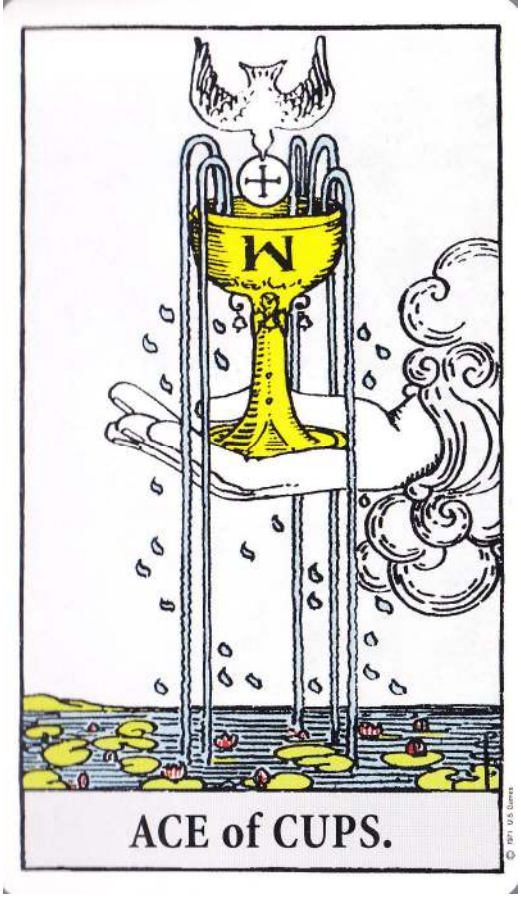
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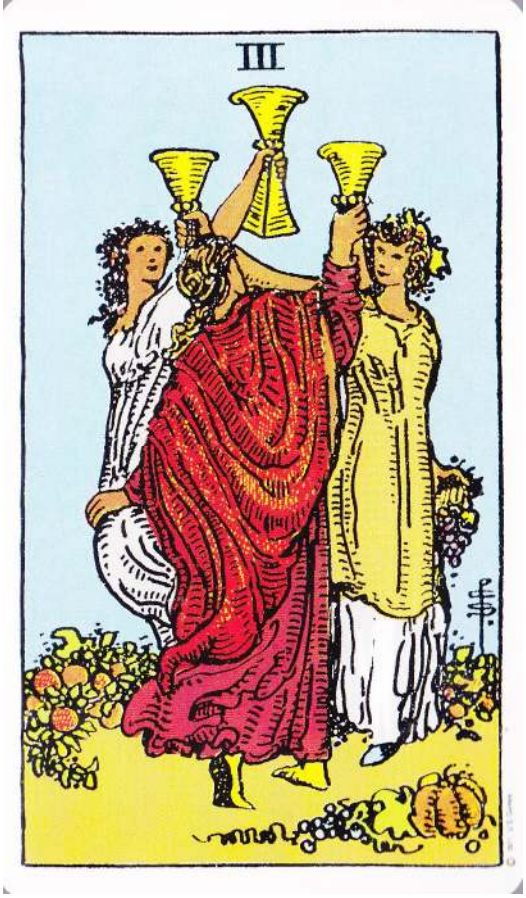
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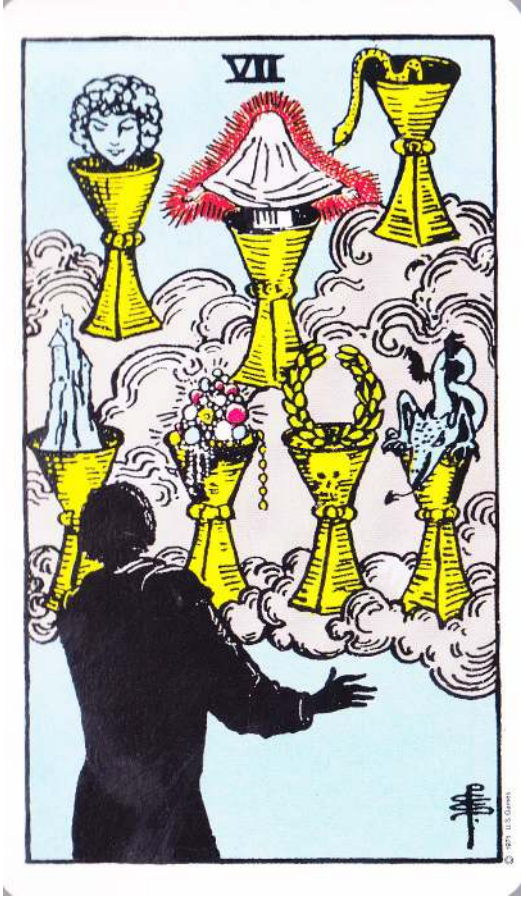
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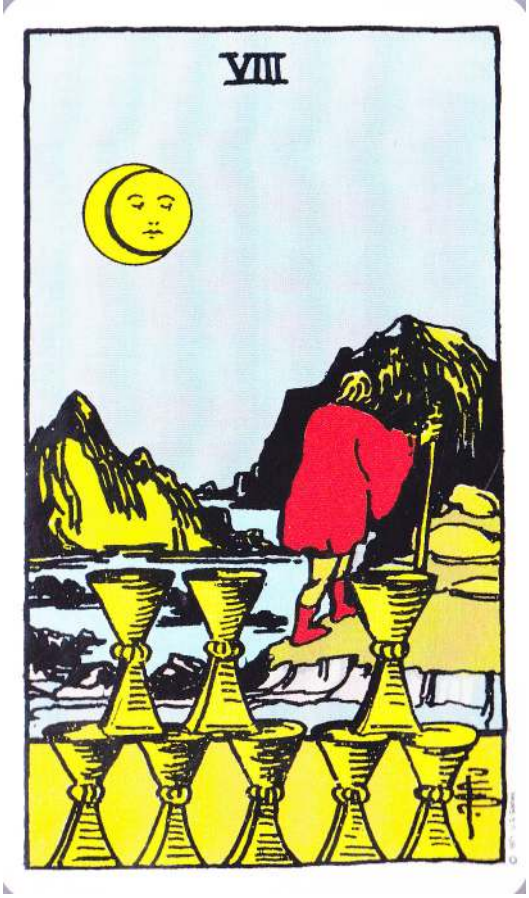
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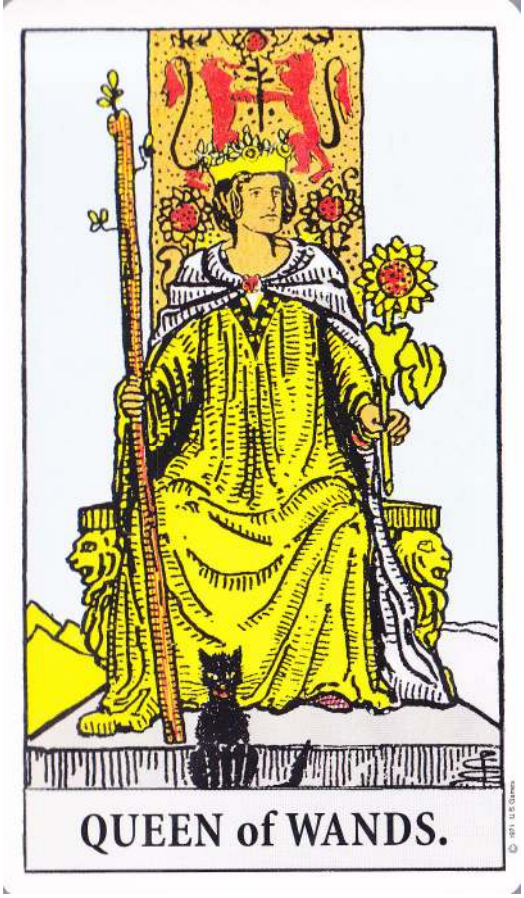

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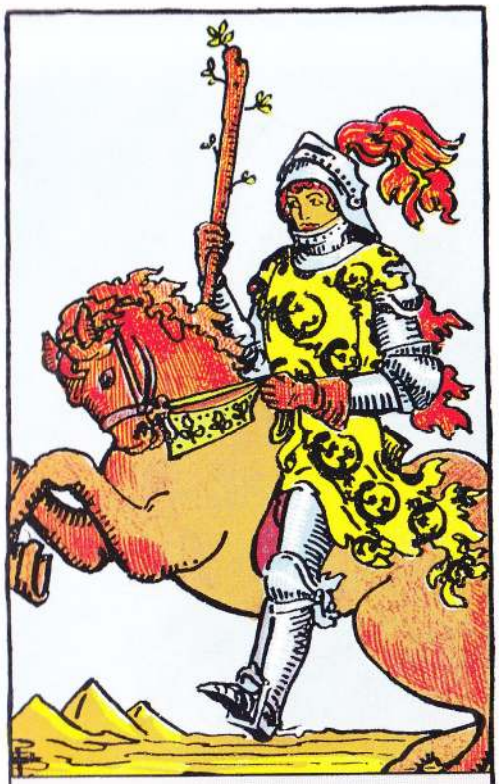

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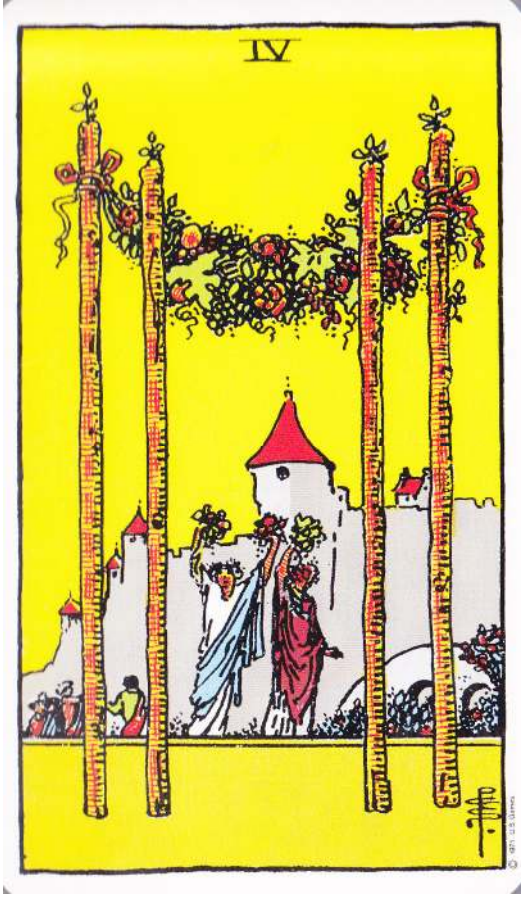
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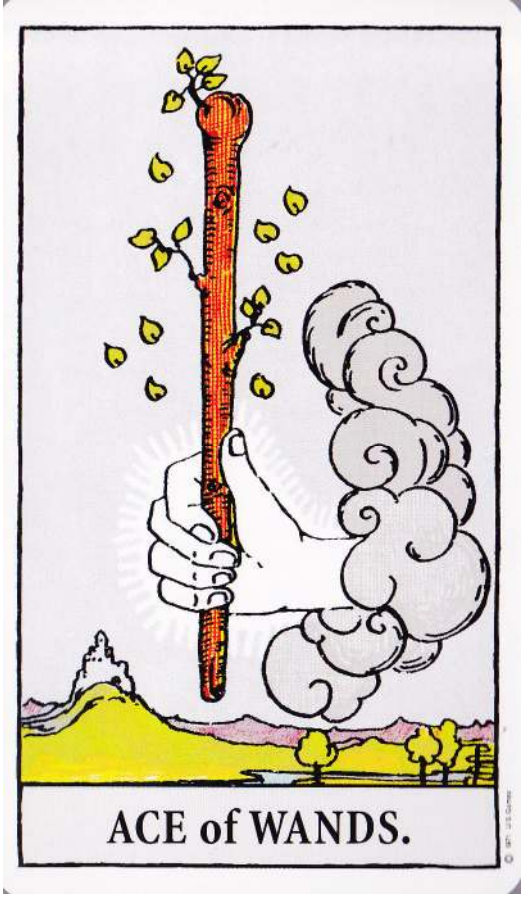
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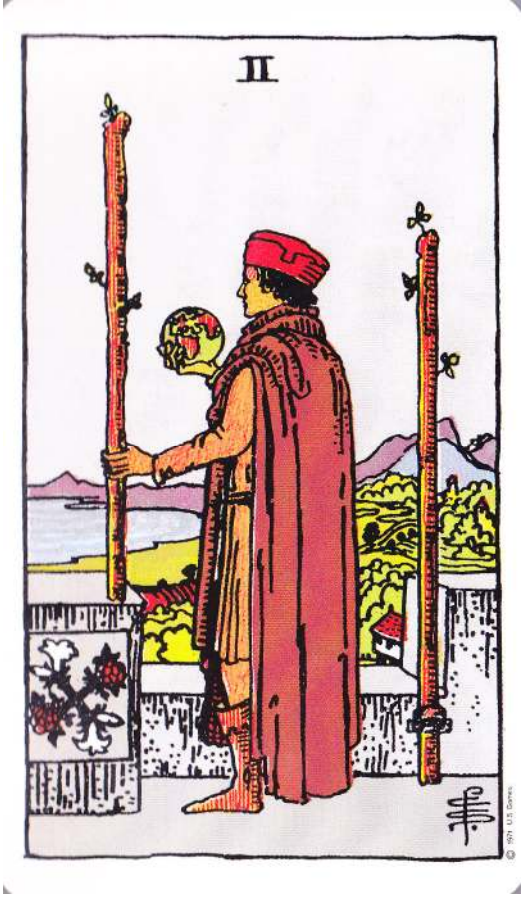
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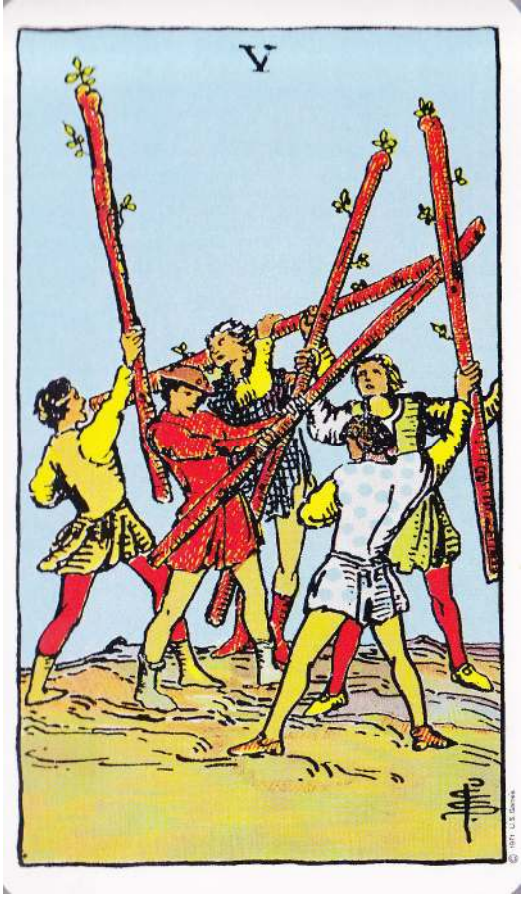
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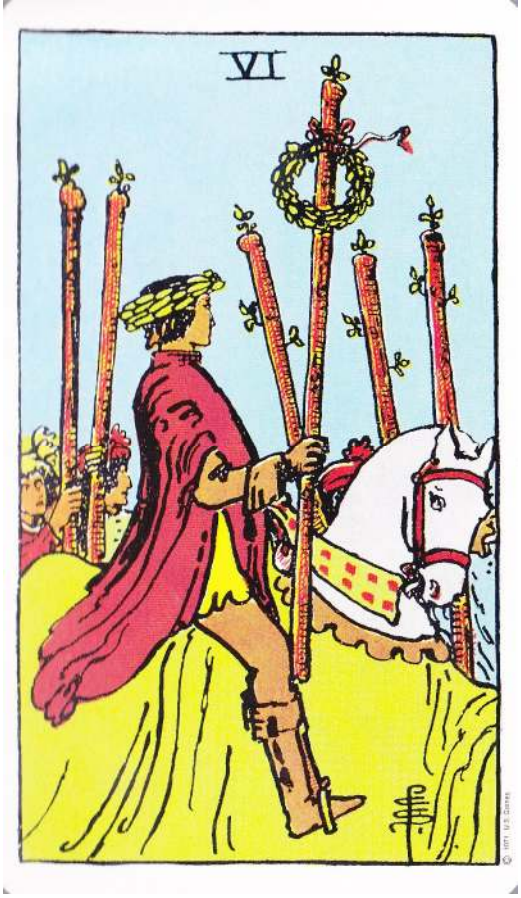
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QUEEN of PENTACLES.

KING of PENTACLES.

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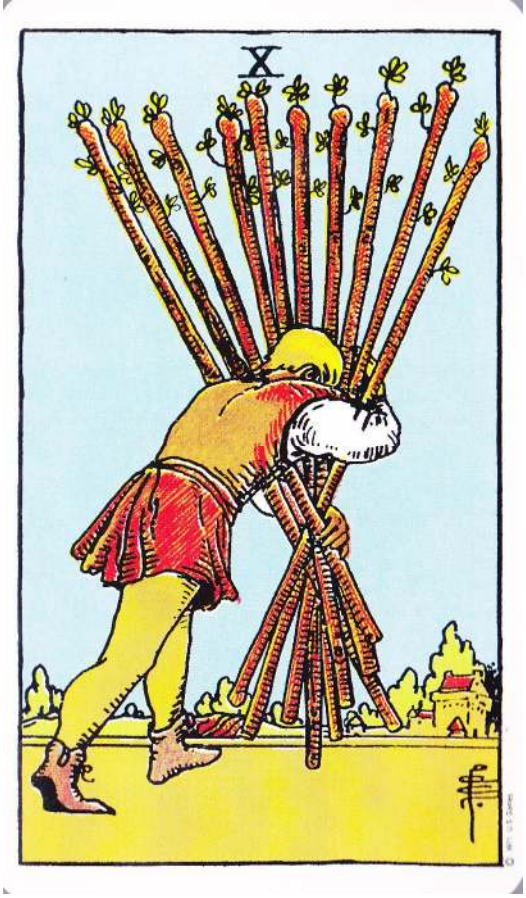
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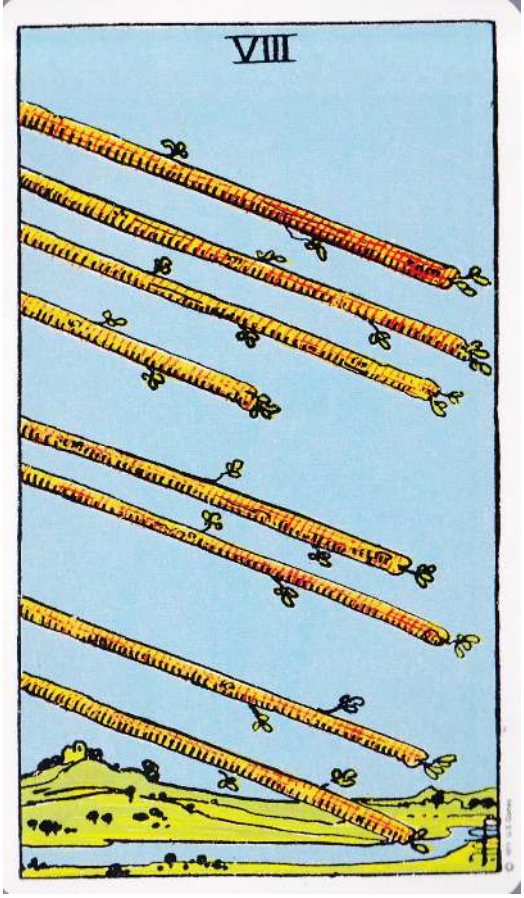
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ACE of PENTACLES.

KNIGHT of PENTACLES.

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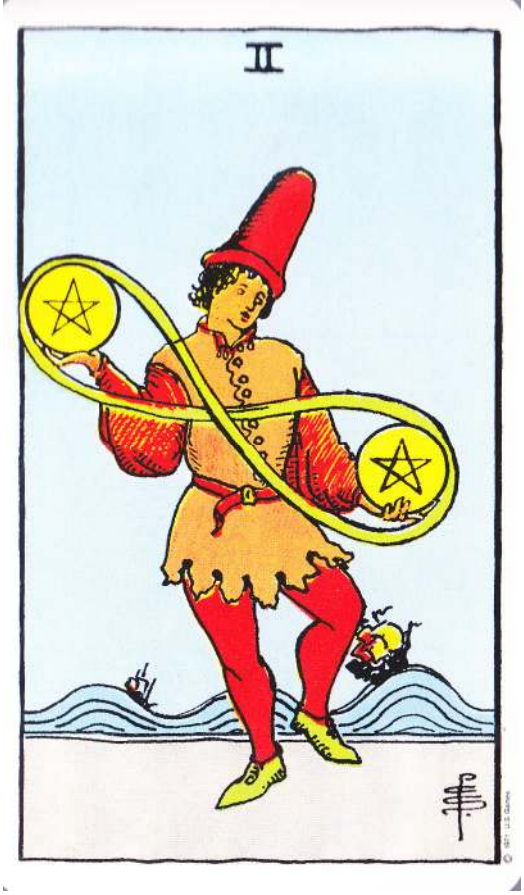
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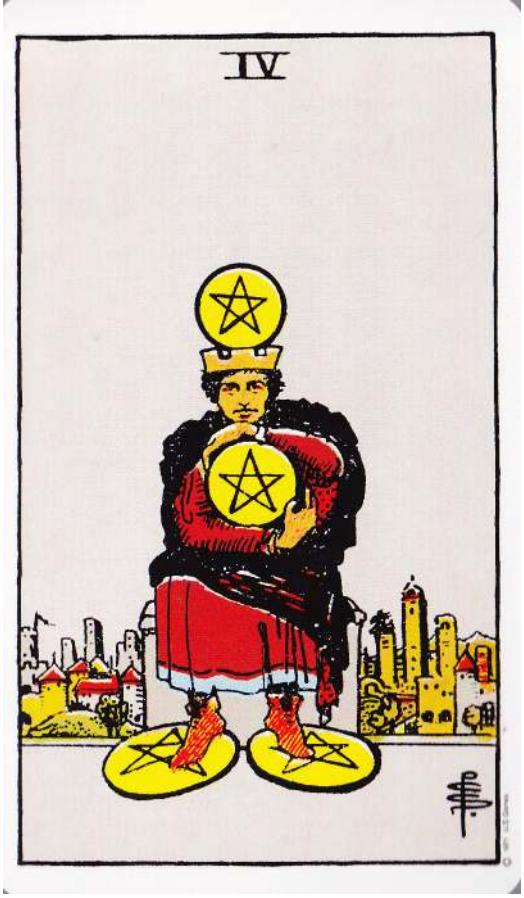
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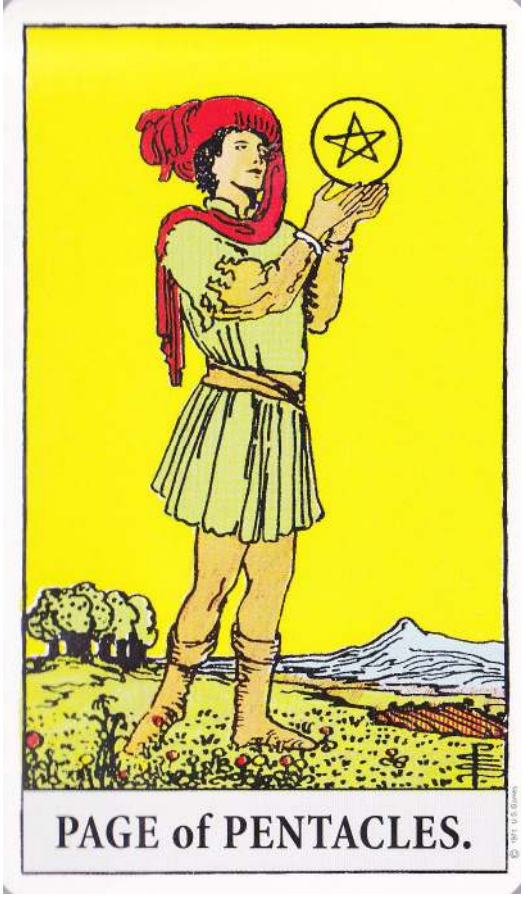

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VIII

VI

VII

X

IX
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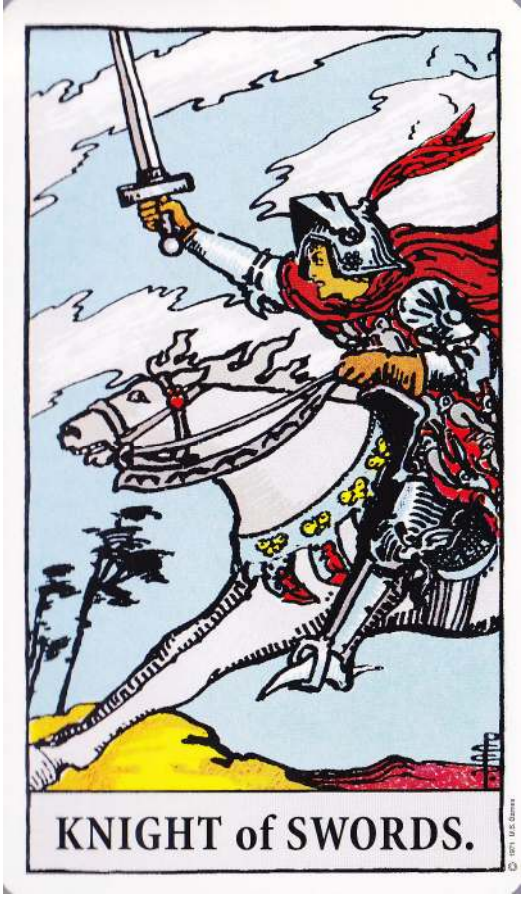
PAGE of SWORDS.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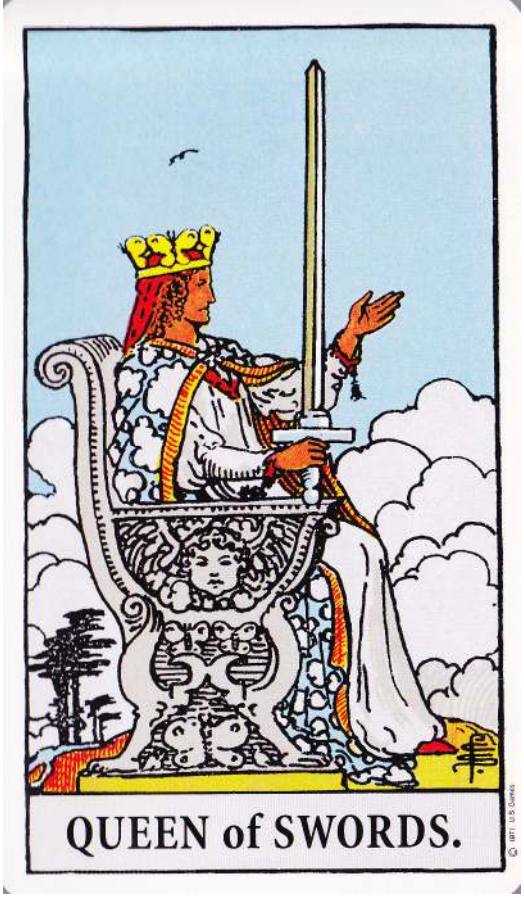
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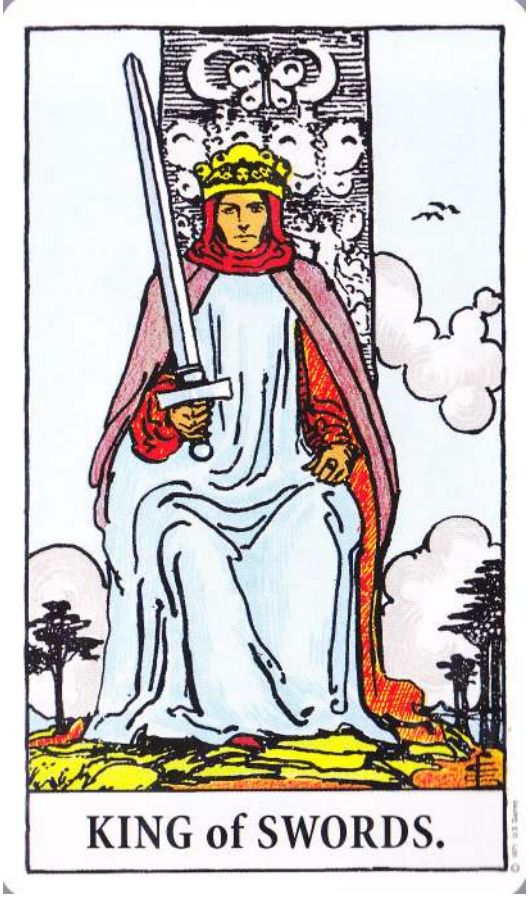

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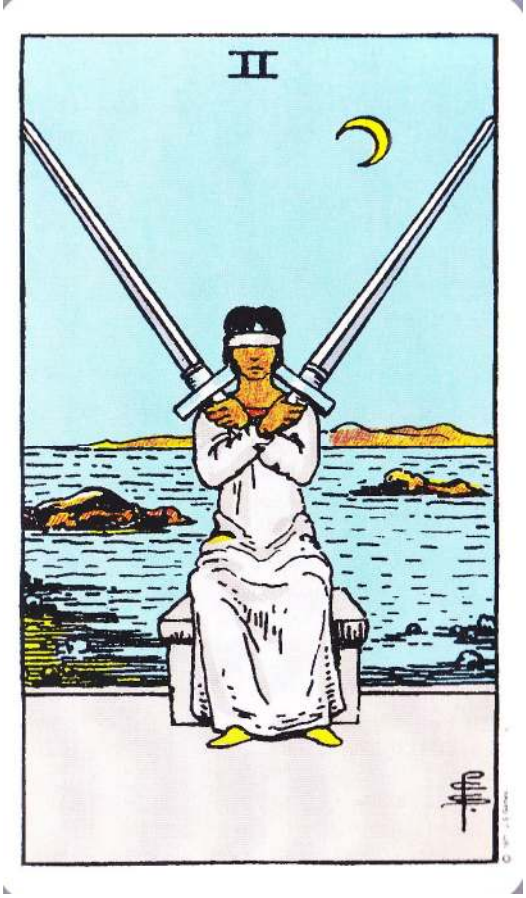
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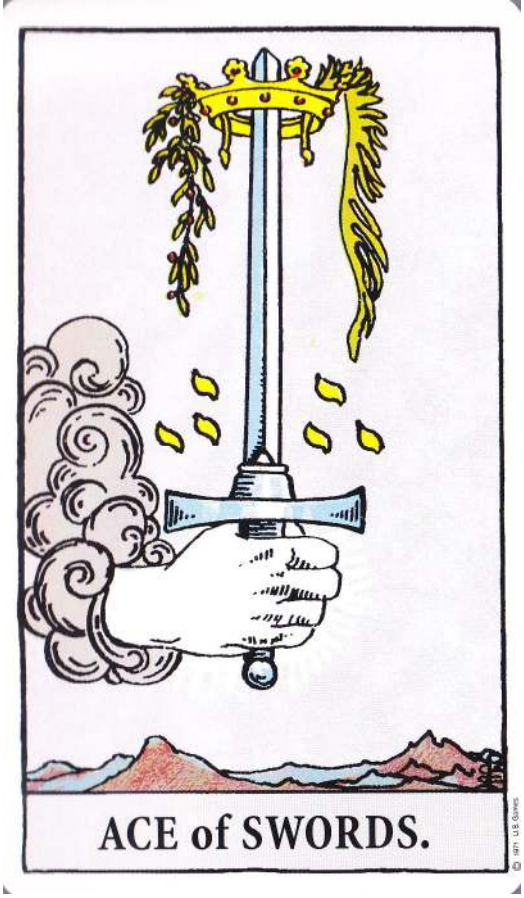
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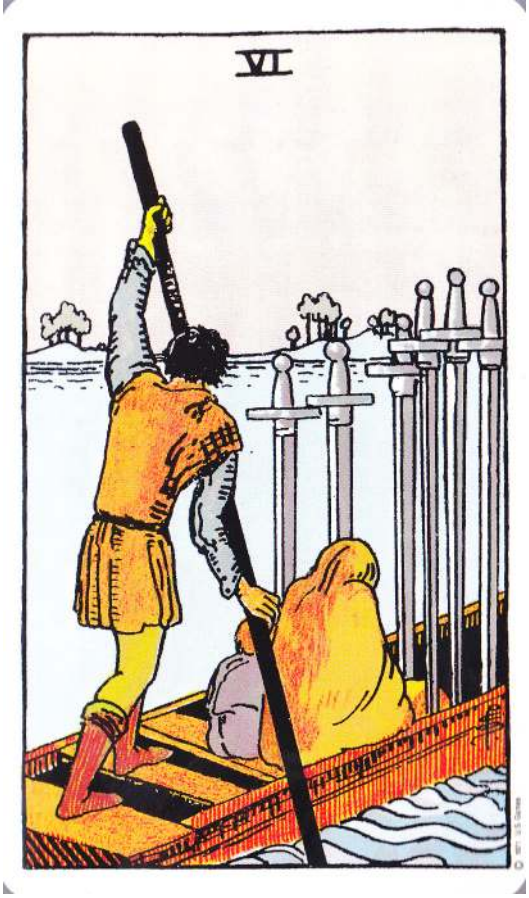
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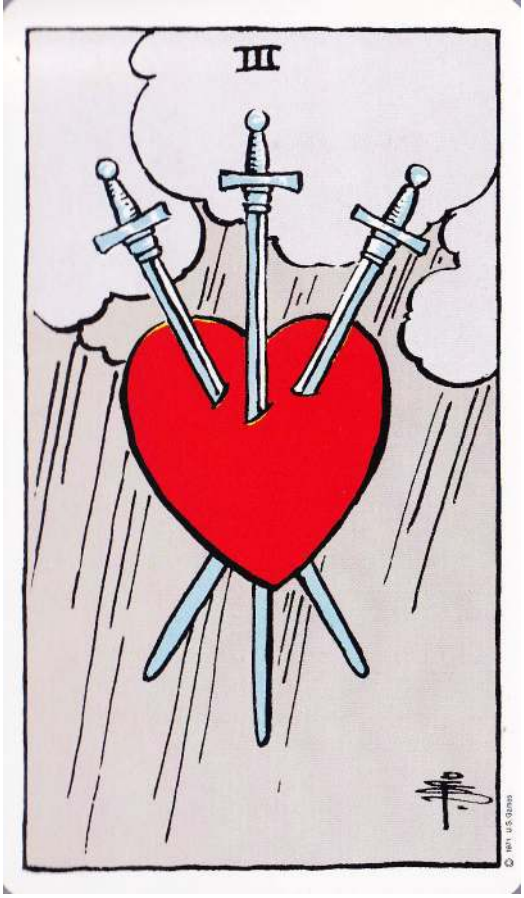
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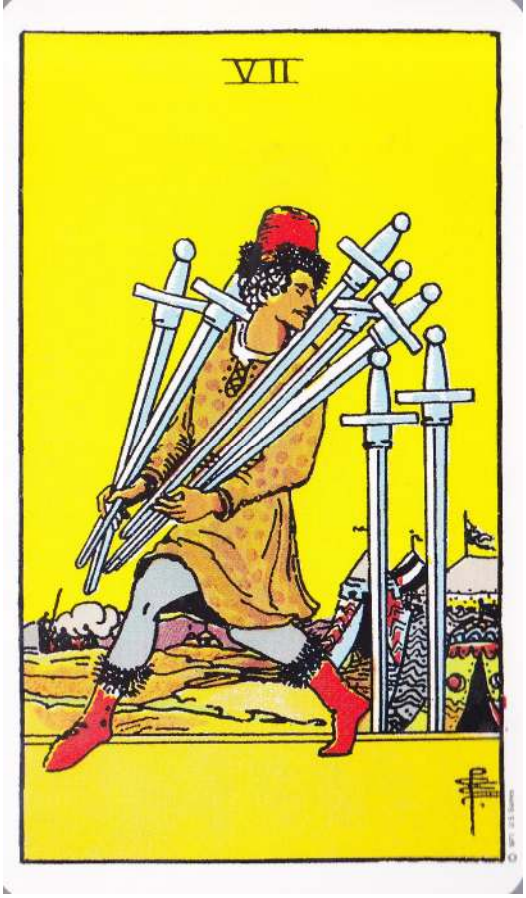
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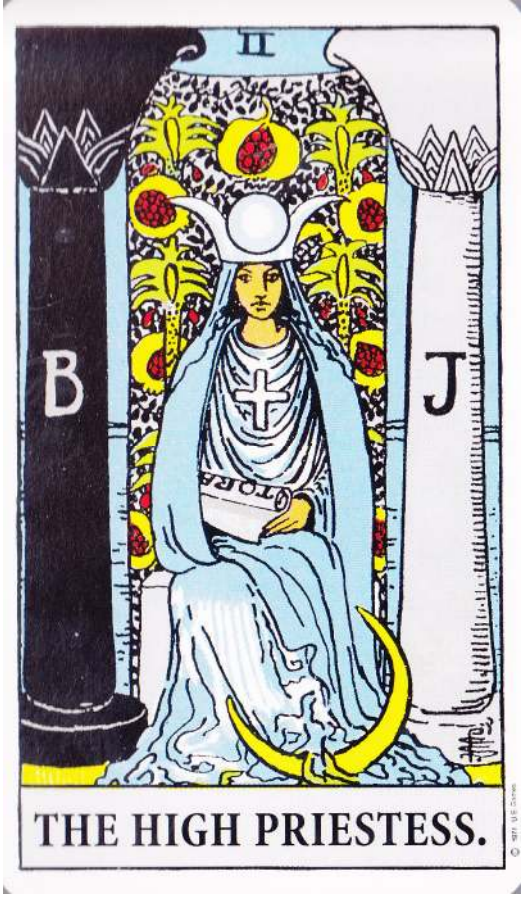
II
B
J
THE HIGH PRIESTESS.

I
THE MAGICIAN.

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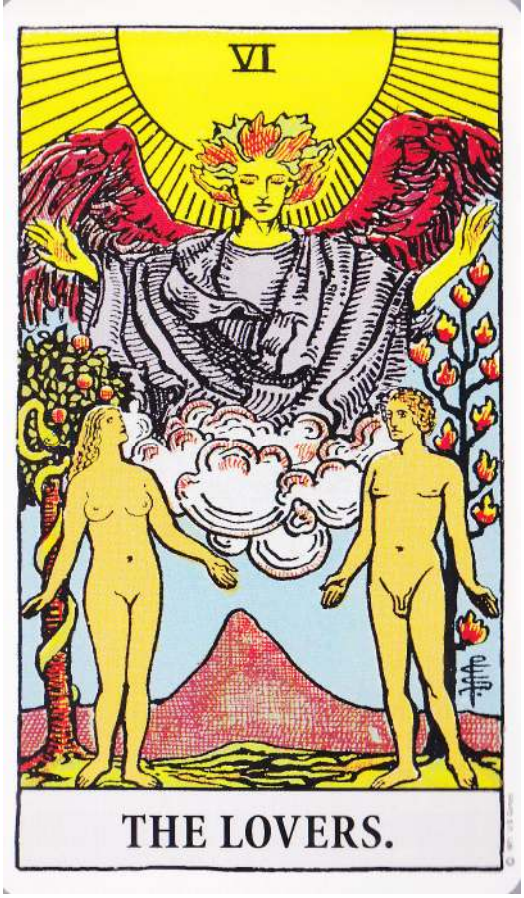
THE FOOL.

VII
THE CHARIOT.

VIII
STRENGTH.

IV
THE EMPEROR.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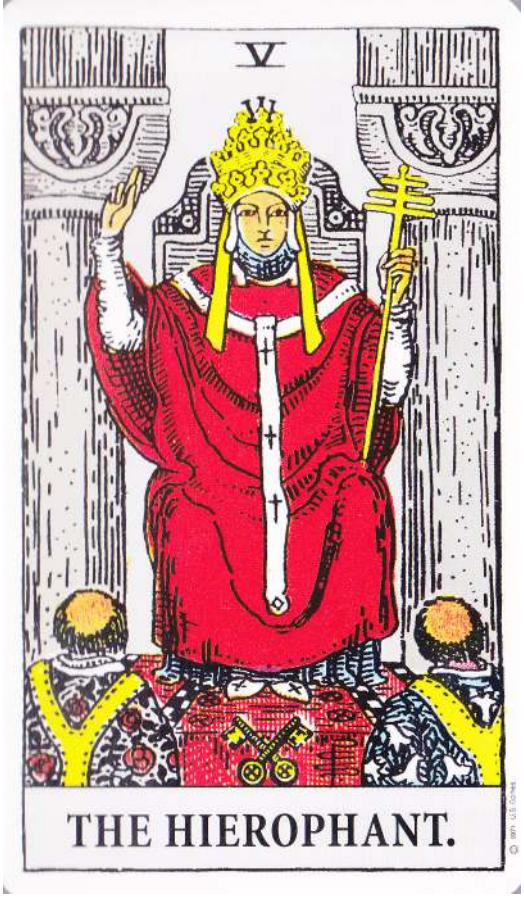
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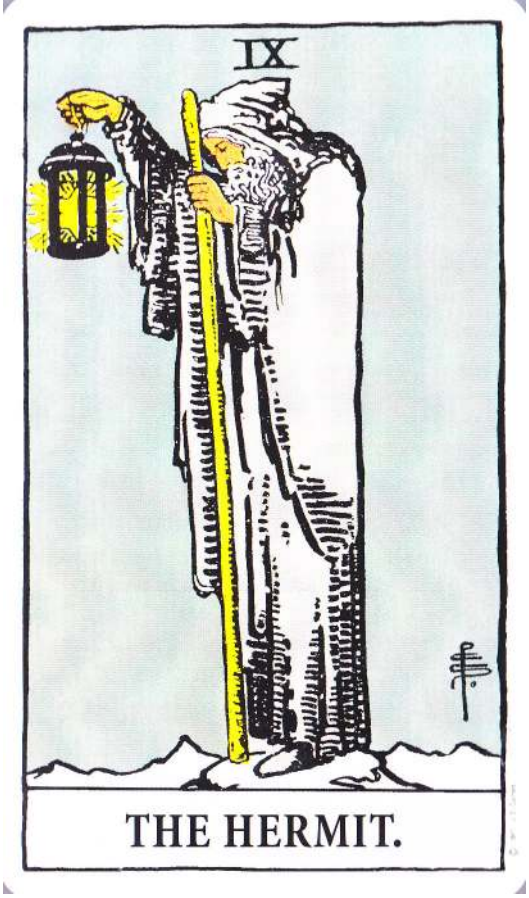
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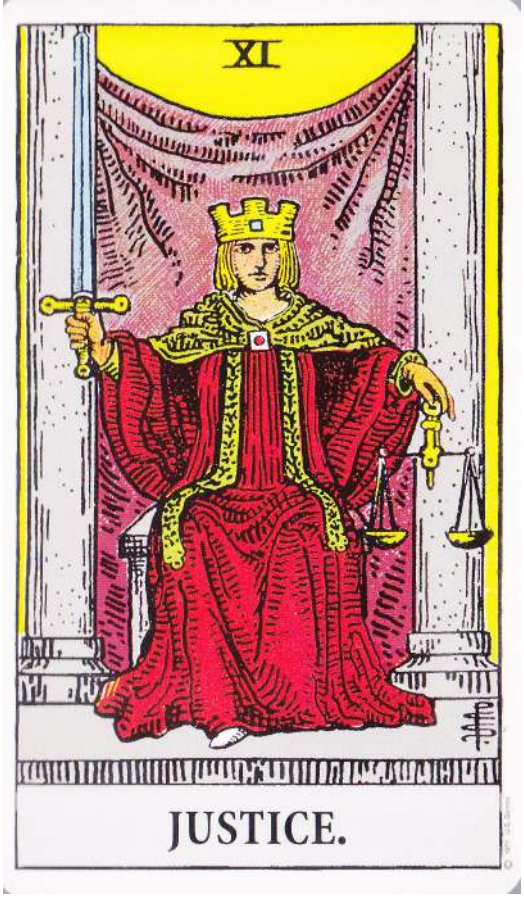
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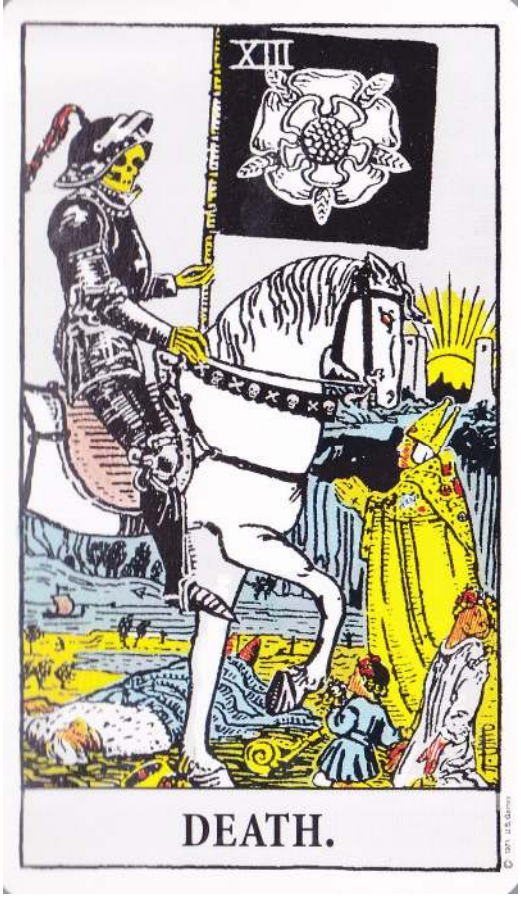
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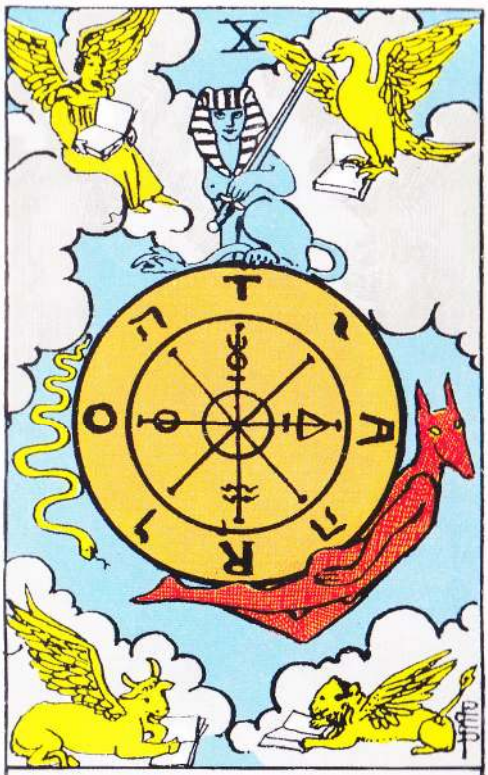
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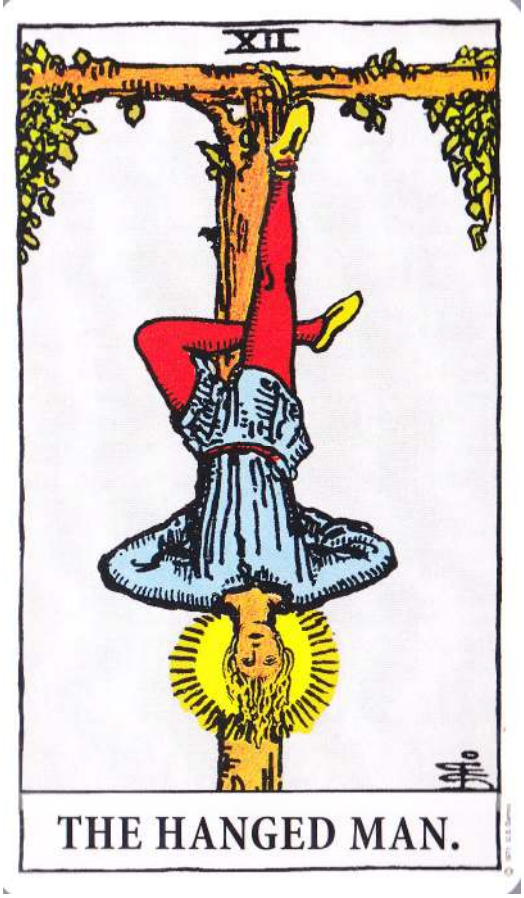
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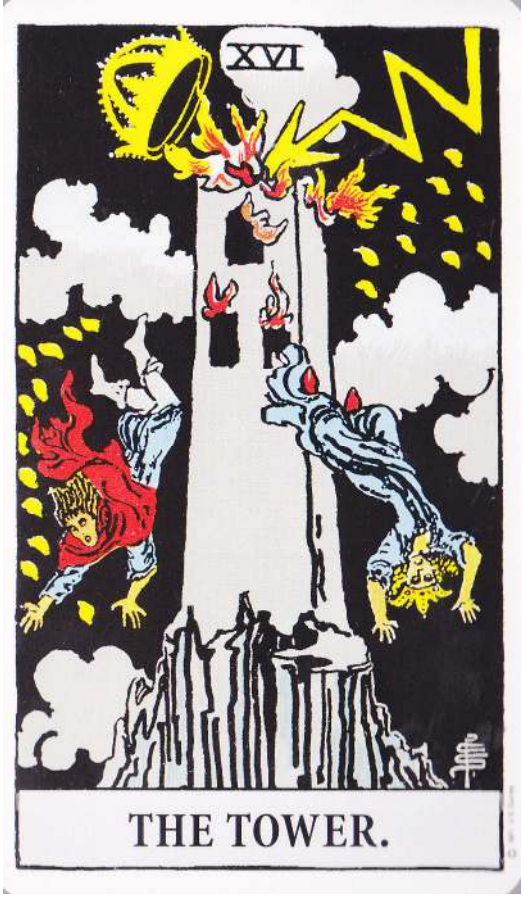
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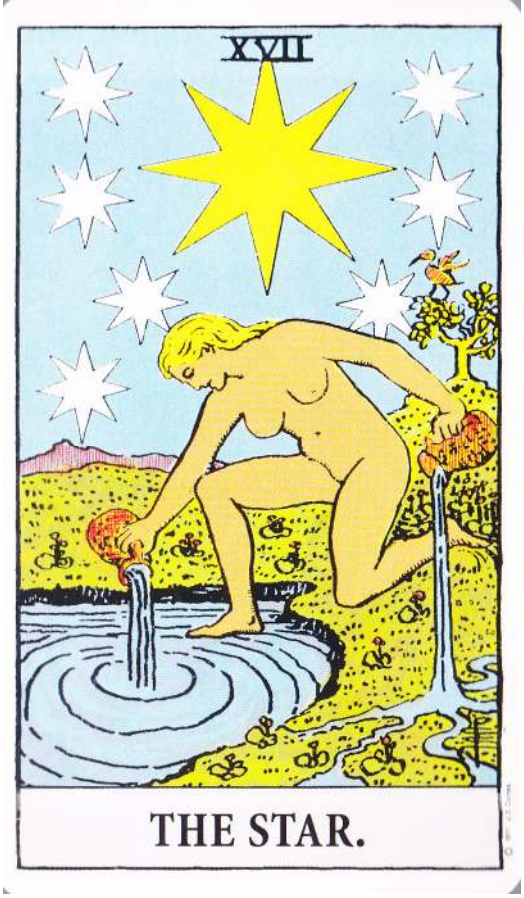
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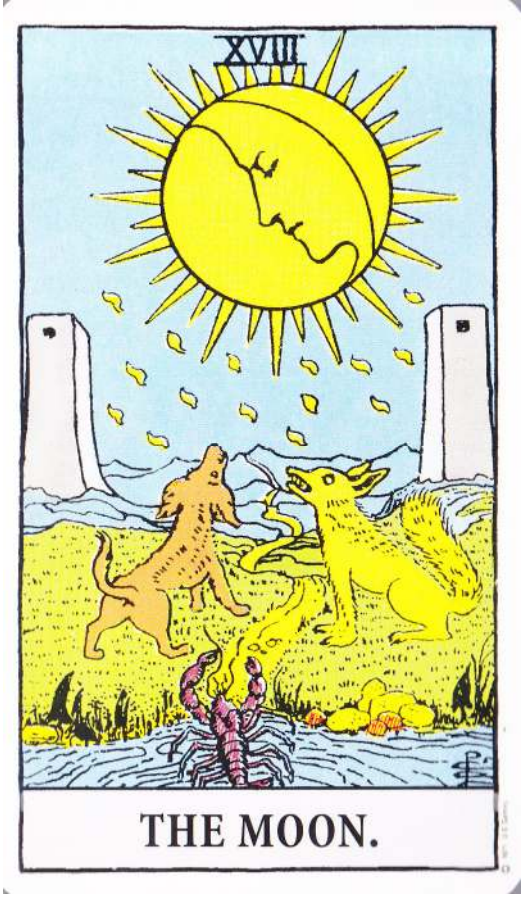
THE SUN.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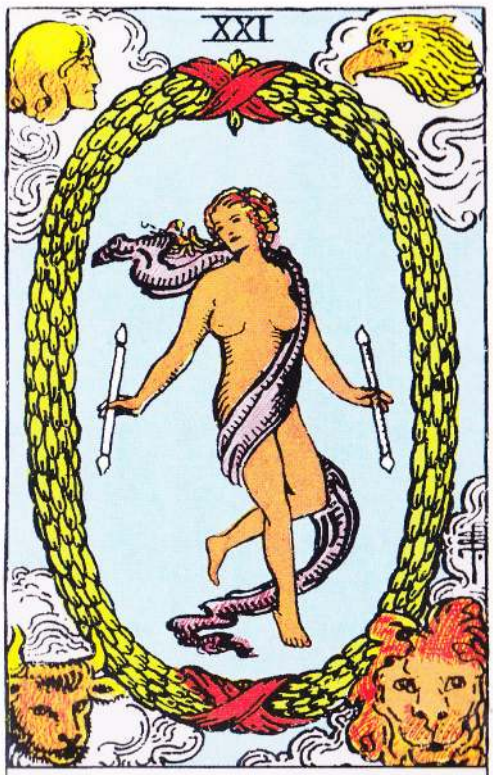

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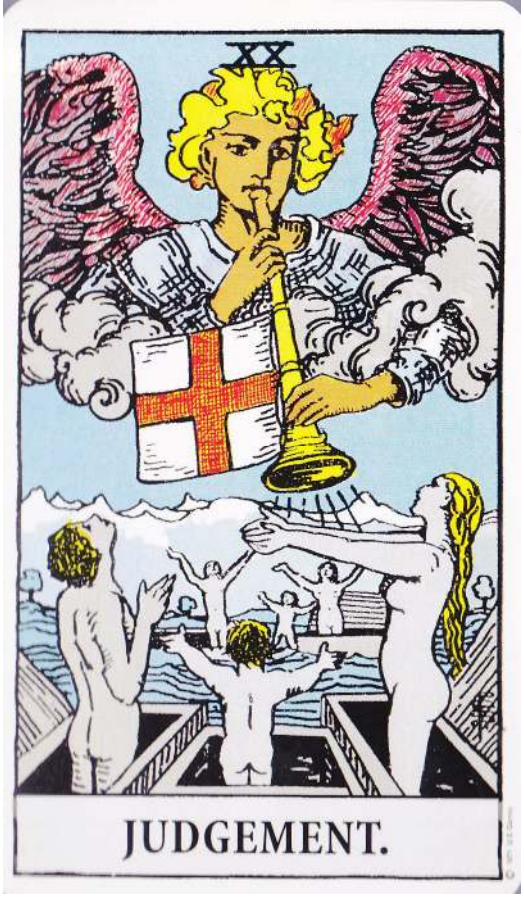
XX
JUDGEMENT.

Pamela Colman Smith

She was born February 16, 1878, in Middlesex, England to American parents. Her childhood years were spent between London, New York, and Kingston, Jamaica.

During her teens, she traveled throughout England with the theatre company of Ellen Terry and Henry Irving. Thereafter, she began formal art training at the Pratt Institute of Brooklyn, graduating in 1897.

Although American by birth, she returned to England, where she became a theatrical designer for miniature theatre, and an illustrator, mainly of books, pamphlets and posters.

Around 1903, she joined the Order of the Golden Dawn. In 1909, under the guidance of Arthur Edward Waite, she undertook, for token payment, a series of seventy-eight allegorical paintings described by Waite as a rectified tarot pack. The designs, published in the same year by William Rider and Son, exemplify the mysticism, ritual, imagination, fantasy, and deep emotions of the artist.

Despite occasional art shows and favorable reviews by critics, the continued slow sales of her works and rejections by commercial publishers left her deeply disappointed.

She never married. She had no known heirs except for an elderly female companion who shared her flat. She died on September 18, 1951, penniless and obscure. There was no funeral procession to honor her life. There was no memorial service to touch upon the impact her work would one day have upon her admirers. She died disappointed that her paintings and writings failed to achieve success, yet she never stopped believing in herself.

Pamela Colman Smith would all but be forgotten, except for the seventy-eight tarot paintings known as the Rider-Waite Tarot pack. She would not doubt be astonished and gladdened to know that today the deck touches the hearts and emotions of millions of people.

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